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*Vietnam: (Information as of 4:30 AM EDT)

Political Developments in South Vietnam: There are continuing reports of friction between supporters of Chief of State Thieu and Premier Ky.

[redacted] [redacted] the joint Thieu-Ky campaign committee is not functioning effectively as a result of the growing antipathy between the two camps. [redacted] there have been a number of instances when the uncooperative attitude of Ky and his supporters had undermined the work of the committee. [redacted]

25X1 [redacted] Thieu's personal relations with Ky have also grown strained in recent weeks. [redacted]

[redacted] Thieu has become increasingly suspicious of Ky's motives and bitterly resents the fact that Ky is continuing to support a covert political organization loyal to himself rather than the joint ticket. Thieu's apprehensions have been increased further by a number of Ky's recent statements which Thieu has interpreted as an attempt to turn the military leadership against him, and to portray Ky as the real leader of the ticket.

Military Developments in South Vietnam: Elements of a US Marine battalion, returning from Operation KINGFISHER in the southern part of the Demilitarized Zone, were ambushed on 29 July by an estimated battalion-size North Vietnamese force. Marine casualties for the 10-hour battle now stand at 23 killed and 119 wounded. Enemy losses thus far reported are 40 dead and many others wounded.

(continued)

No other major fighting occurred elsewhere in the DMZ area or the rest of South Vietnam over the weekend, although a large number of small-unit contacts were reported. These resulted in at least 115 enemy soldiers killed and more than 50 others detained. Friendly casualties were 17 killed and 97 wounded.

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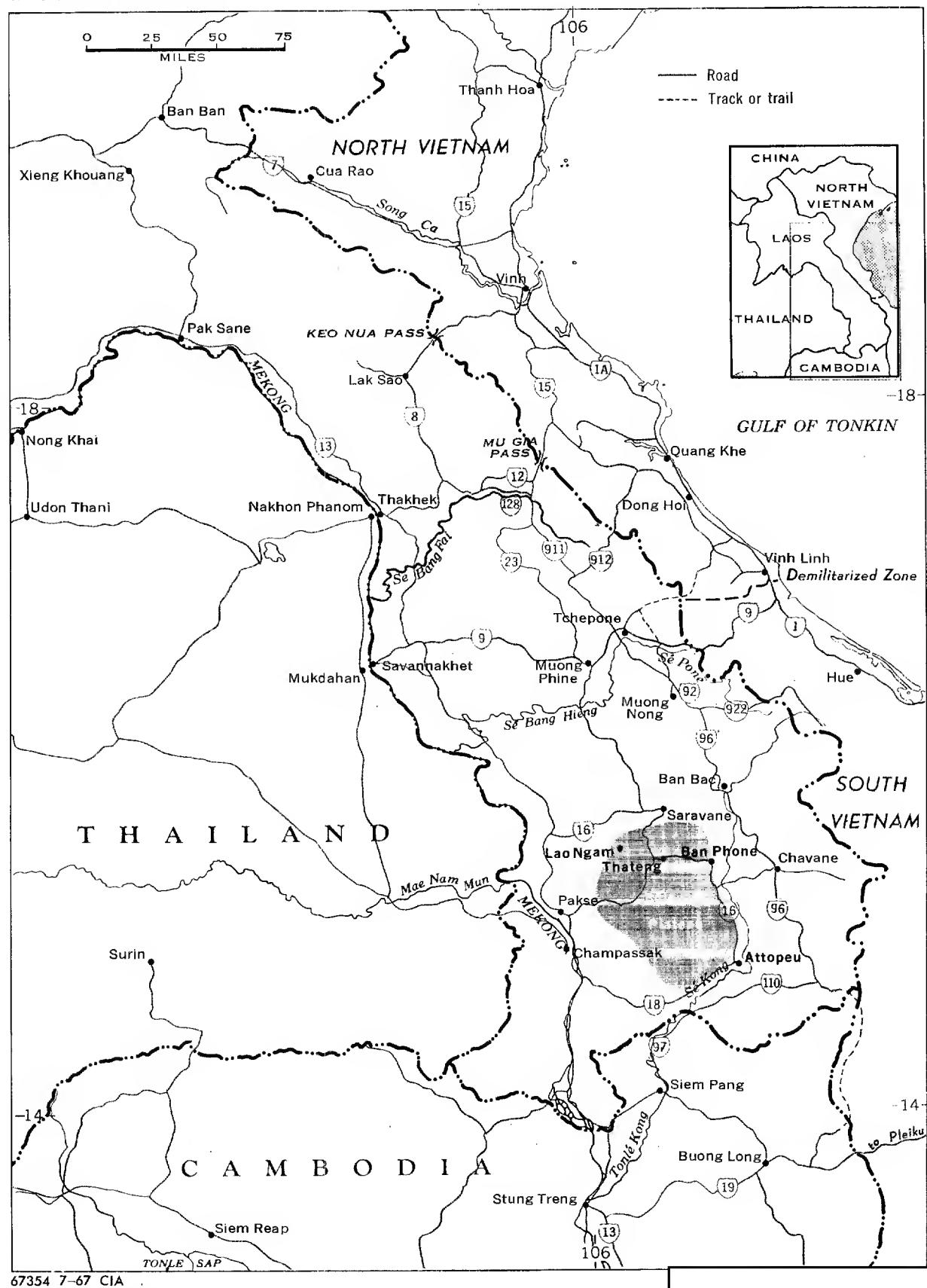
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Laos: The Communists have made several sharp attacks against government positions in southern Laos.

North Vietnamese troops in estimated battalion strength destroyed a Royal Laotian Army (FAR) command post at Thateng on 27 July and inflicted heavy casualties on the defenders before withdrawing, [redacted]

[redacted] The FAR's tactical position at Thateng was further weakened by the loss of a key heavy weapons position a few miles northeast on 28 July.

These attacks are the most intense the enemy has made in the Bolovens Plateau area since friendly troops were driven out of Ban Phone on 19 July. They may presage a concerted effort to push government forces from the eastern rim of the plateau.

The government has moved reinforcements into Thateng and another key position at Lao Ngam, but its defensive capability has been hampered in recent weeks by poor weather which has limited tactical air support. The enemy, moreover, has increased pressure against government positions farther south near Attopeu, in what appears to be an effort to draw off government reinforcements from other contested areas.

The renewed Communist military effort is probably designed to regain rice-growing territory which has come under government control in the past six months. It is probably also intended to counter increased government intelligence and harassment operations into the vital infiltration corridor. The government's operations have been staged from advanced bases on the eastern fringe of the Bolovens Plateau.

Jerusalem - West Bank: Arab resistance to the Israeli occupation of Arab Jerusalem and the West Bank of the Jordan is increasing.

It is partly reflected in the dissatisfaction spreading among residents in these areas over the actions of the occupying Israeli authorities. Muslim religious leaders have protested infringements on Muslim religious rights. The US Consulate General in Jerusalem has unconfirmed reports that a protest regarding Christian canon law is also being circulated.

Friction is beginning to appear in connection with tourist activities. Israeli guides are reportedly urging tourists not to buy from Arabs in Hebron, while Nablus merchants declared a general strike on 28 July. Former Old City guides in Arab Jerusalem are barred from working until they pass an Israeli guide course.

At least four different leaflets warning Arab residents of Jerusalem and the West Bank against cooperation with Israeli authorities have been reported in the press. [redacted] one of these was originated by the Israeli Communist Party. A boycott of Israelis is reportedly planned by the Old City Chamber of Commerce and Muslim leaders as part of a general campaign of civil disobedience.

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The Israeli Government, continuing its pressure on the US Consulate General in Jerusalem, has now forbidden any contact between the consulate and Israeli officials on the West Bank. The government insists that all matters be taken up with the foreign office which recognized the consulate general only on a de facto basis.

Considerable time was spent at yesterday's regular Israeli cabinet meeting discussing the situation on the West Bank. Afterward, one official stated that a "liberal policy" would be followed, but any organized resistance would be crushed. [redacted]

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